

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-05 USIA-15 EURE-00 CIAE-00 INR-11

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SCS-03 SCA-01 L-03 SY-04 SP-03 DRC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0265

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, RO (SALZMANN, LAWRENCE)

SUBJECT: DETENTION OF FULBRIGHT GRANTEE

SUMMARY: ON SEPTEMBER 17, FULBRIGHT GRANTEE LAWRENCE SALZMANN WAS DETAINED BY LOCAL POLICE FOR FOUR AND A HALF HOURS AFTER TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE CORNER OF THE STREET WHERE THE EMBASSY IS LOCATED. NO CHARGES WERE MADE AGAINST HIM BEFORE HE WAS RELEASED. END.

1. ON SEPTEMBER 17 AT 1500 HRS MR. LAWRENCE SALZMANN, A USCIT AND FULBRIGHT GRANTEE WAS TAKING PICTURES OF PEOPLE PASSING BY A WALL LOCATED APPROX 200 FEET AWAY FROM THE EMBASSY. HE WAS SUDDENLY APPROACHED BY A MAN IN MILITARY UNIFORM AND A POLICEMAN STANDING NEAR THE EMBASSY, AND TOLD THAT A PRIVATE CITIZEN HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT HIS ACTIVITIES.

2. MR. SALZMANN WAS TAKEN TO A GARAGE DIRECTLY ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE EMBASSY WHERE HE WAS ASKED TO TURN OVER HIS CAMERA TO THE POLICEMAN. WHEN HE REFUSED, HIS FILM WAS CONFISCATED AND HE WAS INFORMED THAT IT WOULD BE RETURNED TO HIM

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AFTER IT WAS DEVELOPED.

3. MR. SALZMANN THEN TRIED TO LEAVE THE GARAGE TO GO ACROSS THE STREET TO SEEK ASSISTANCE FROM THE EMBASSY. HE WAS STOPPED BY THE POLICEMAN WHO INDICATED BY POINTING HIS AUTOMATIC WEAPON IN HIS DIRECTION THAT HE SHOULD STAY WHERE HE WAS. ANOTHER MAN WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED THE GRANTEE TO THE GARAGE ALSO PULLED OUT A PISTOL. SALZMANN ASKED SEVERAL TIMES IN INTELLIGIBLE ROMANIAN TO BE ALLOWED TO GET IN CONTACT WITH THE AMERICAN EMBASSY AND WAS REFUSED.

4. AFTER AN HOUR AND A HALF, A DETECTIVE WITH THE POLICE WHO IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS GHEORGHE VASILESCU ARRIVED AND DROVE THE FULBRIGHT GRANTEE DOWN TO THE POLICE STATION. THERE SALZMANN WAS TOLD AGAIN THAT HIS FILM WAS GOING TO BE DEVELOPED TO BE SURE IT CONTAINED NOTHING SENSITIVE, AND THEN RETURNED TO HIM. HIS PICTURE WAS ALSO TAKEN BY AN OFFICIAL POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER EIGHT OR NINE TIMES. NO CHARGES WERE REFERRED AGAINST MR. SALZMANN, AND HE SIGNED NO STATEMENTS WHILE AT THE STATION. ABOUT 1930 HRS. HE WAS RELEASED, AND DRIVEN HOME BY DETECTIVE VASILESCU.

5. EXCEPT WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO LEAVE THE GARAGE, MR. SALZMANN WAS TREATED COURTEOUSLY. THE FILM, HOWEVER, HAS NOT BEEN RETURNED TO HIM AS PROMISED ON SEPTEMBER 19. NOW THE SAME DETECTIVE HAS TOLD HIM IT WILL BE DELIVERED SEPTEMBER 23.

6. IRONICALLY, SALZMANN IS THE RECIPIENT OF A FULBRIGHT GRANT TO TAKE PICTURES IN ROMANIA TO PROMOTE ITS FOLKLORE AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS ON THE BASIS OF A PROGRAM APPROVED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE U.S.-ROMANIAN CULTURAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENT.

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7. THE GRANTEE HAS REPORTED THE INCIDENT TO THE FOREIGN RELATIONS OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST WHERE HE WORKS, AND THE OFFICE HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE HIM WITH A SPECIAL CERTIFICATE AUTHORIZING HIM TO TAKE PICTURES.

8. EMBASSY IS TAKING UP THIS CASE WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND REQUESTING AN EXPLANATION

WHY MR. SALZMANN WAS DETAINED. THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME DETENTION OF A FULBRIGHT GRANTEE HAS
COME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE EMBASSY.
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